



Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council Newsletter

SERVICE CONTINUES

Council co-chairs: CAPT Bud Schneeweis and SCPO Mike White

Issue 16

31 March 2009

SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Your Council continues to be active, meeting Friday 27 March 2009 at USCG HQ.

Key issues were

- Briefing by Headquarters Support Command representative
- Holiday Party Feedback & Pre-Planning for 3rd Annual Party
- Holiday Cards
- Status of Google List and Council Outreach
- Help Desk Utilization - (New e-mail nrhdesk@gmail.com)
- Update on Newsletter
- Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council Website Update
- Development of Caregivers Guide & Status Update
- VA Information Update
- Support for Retiring Reservists
- Discussion of Transition Impact on Retirees
- Development of SOP for New Council Officers
- Transition Impact on Retirees
- National Coast Guard Retiree Council Meeting-5/5-5/7 2009
- Schedule 2009 Council Meetings

*** Local Capital Area Coast Guard Retirees are welcome to serve on committees.

A copy of the Council meeting Agendas and minutes are posted on the Council web site, <http://www.uscg.mil/ccs/carc>, and can be downloaded, or may be requested from Council Secretary, Lula Carpenter, ph (703 913 7390) or e-mail: leecarp@verizon.net.

The Council's objective is to publish a quarterly newsletter and provide the **Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree, military and civilian**, with information on Council activities and items of interest to Retirees in the Washington DC, Maryland and Northern Virginia Council area. In addition, items that are time-critical will be sent using the Council "Google" E-Mail list.

All Area Retirees are invited to contribute to the **Newsletter**, attend a Council meeting, and are welcome to communicate with Council members prior to the Council meetings, or to provide informational items of interest to retirees. Please send an e mail, call, or write to the Council Co-Chairs, CAPT Bud Schneeweis and YNCS Mike White, the Council Secretary, Lula Carpenter or to the **Newsletter** editor, (Norm Lemley) 703 528-1660; e-mail: nlemley2@comcast.net.

Please "Pass on" this Newsletter to other USCG military and civilian retirees that may

be interested. **Additional e-mail /or snail mail addresses and phone numbers for the Council mailing list are very welcome.**

All are urged to look at the Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council a WEB site, <http://www.uscg.mil/ccs/carc>. The Council believes that access to this WEB site will enable Retirees to become better informed on the current Coast Guard organization and operations. Suggestions for items to be posted are welcome!!!!

Send them to the Retiree Council webmaster, CAPT Bob Warakomsky, at bpwarakom@cox.net

Your Council looks forward to serving all Coast Guard Retirees, military and civilian, and continues to extend an invitation to attend Council meetings, to participate in Council projects and to keep us informed of your issues and concerns.

Council Meeting Schedule for 2009

Fri 26 June 2009

Fri 25 September 2009

Fri 4 December 2009

Fri 28 March 2010

Meetings are normally held at USCG Headquarters in Conference Room B718 beginning at 0900.

The Council Status

Council co-chairs, CAPT Bud Schneeweis and SCPO Mike White report that the **Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council is active and doing well.**

Your Council:

- Meets quarterly at HQ
- Monitors issues of interest to USCG retirees, military, both active duty and reserve, and civilian
- Revised the Council Charter to include retired civilians, in concert with the revised National Council Charter
- Developed and manages the **CGHQ's National Retiree Help Desk (NRHD)**
- Established a Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council Website <http://www.uscg.mil/ccs/carc>
- Issued 16 Newsletters to date
- Participates actively in the National Coast Guard Retiree Council Annual Meetings
- Is developing a Caregivers Guide
- Sponsored 2 successful Holiday Parties and is planning the third.
- Sends Holiday Cards to Area Retiree 75 and over

The Council "Google" E-Mail List Needs to be Updated.

The Council "Google" e-mail list needs to be updated for a number of reasons. One, computer gremlins seem to have stolen some of the key info. The most of the mail addresses are intact but the associated names, mailing addresses, phone numbers in many cases are missing.

Please provide the following to Susan Baicar at susanbaicar2@mac.com.

Name/Rank
Addresses
Ph no
current e mail
Spouse name

HQ move to St Elizabeth's

CAPT Smith, Headquarters Support Command, the Council sponsor, gave a briefing on the HQ move to St Elizabeth's. HQ will move into a new building with a tentative schedule of 2013. The Council web page has more details.

The Council, noting that CAPT Smith will retire before the next meeting, enthusiastically, thanked him for his active and sustained support throughout his Headquarters Support Command tenure.

CGHQ's National Retiree Help Desk (NRHD) needs Volunteer Watch Standers

The National Retiree Help Desk (NRHD) is running smoothly with strong support from DC Area Retiree volunteers. A small group of dedicated volunteers manage it. Several are outside the DC area. Bob Warakomsky and Dave DuPont have organized it in a way that watch standers do not have to come into HQ to stand watch. All that is needed is a computer. Also there is a body of "Frequently Asked Questions" that provide very good information to help watch standers answer the inquiries received.

Additional volunteers to stand the watch are needed. The Council urges you to consider volunteering. To volunteer contact Bob Warakomsky bpwarakom@cox.net or Dave DuPont, David.A.DuPont@uscg.mil

National Council Help Desk New E mail Address

The National Council Help Desk has a new e-mail address - nrhdesk@gmail.com

2rd Annual DC Retiree Council Holiday Party, a Good Time Was Had By All

The 2rd Annual DC Retiree Council Holiday Party at Vinson Hall Sunday, 14 December a great success.. Old and new friends met in the Holiday Spirit. The Commandant and Mrs. Allen attended and he is looking forward to next year's party and said he plans to hold a briefing session with Retirees on the Coast Guard activities and plans.



The December Archive of the Commandant's Blog (<http://www.uscg.mil/comdt/blog/>) has comments and pictures from the Retiree Council Holiday Party. Additional photos are posted on the Council Web page and posted on Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/uscgpress/3108023369/>)

3rd Annual DC Retiree Council Holiday Party to be at Vinson Hall 12 December

The 3rd Annual DC Retiree Council Holiday Party to be at Vinson Hall Sunday, 12 December from 4-6:30. MARK YOUR CALENDAR. Remember to Register early. The Commandant and the CG Master Chief of the CG are expected to attend. All are welcome! Additional details will be provided later on the Retiree Web page and via the Retiree google e mail list. Additional photos are posted on the Council Web page. MARK YOUR CALENDAR. Remember to Register early. The Commandant and the CG Master Chief of the CG are expected to attend. All are welcome! Additional details will be provided later on the Retiree Web page and via the Retiree google e mail list. The Planning Committee is being formed and members from the DC Area Retiree community are welcome to serve and suggestions and ideas are also welcome. Send input to nlemley2@comcast.net.

USCG Service Secretary Transfer of Authority Ceremony Held 23 March

The Commandant hosted a US Coast Guard Service Secretary Transfer of Authority ceremony on 23 March at Coast Guard Air Station Washington, Reagan National Airport Hangar Six.

This ceremony commemorated the transition of leadership over the Coast Guard from former Secretary Michael Chertoff to Secretary Janet Napolitano.

The event also reaffirmed civilian authority over the Coast Guard as one of the five Armed Services. Similar to a military Change of Command where responsibility is shifted from one person to another, the Transfer of Authority ceremony included the symbolic passing of the Coast Guard flag from the previous Secretary, Michael Chertoff to the new Secretary, Janet Napolitano.

Sixty-Eighth Anniversary of the Coast Guard Reserve

ALCOAST 099/09
COMDTNOTE 5700

SUBJ: SIXTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COAST GUARD RESERVE

1. FEBRUARY 19 MARKS THE SIXTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COAST GUARD RESERVE. I CONGRATULATE THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE COAST GUARD RESERVE ON ANOTHER EXCEPTIONAL YEAR OF SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY.

2. THE COAST GUARD RESERVE WAS CREATED IN 1941 WHEN CONGRESS AMENDED THE COAST GUARD AUXILIARY AND RESERVE ACT. SINCE THAT TIME, COAST GUARD RESERVISTS HAVE DILIGENTLY STOOD THE WATCH AT HOME AND ABROAD READY FOR ALL THREATS AND ALL HAZARDS.

3. AS WE MOVE TOWARD MODERNIZING OUR COAST GUARD, THE RESERVE FORCE REMAINS VITAL TO OUR SUCCESS. I AM COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE READINESS OF THE RESERVE COMPONENT BY CREATING AND SOURCING AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE THAT ALLOWS US TO ADEQUATELY TRAIN, ADMINISTRATIVELY SUPPORT AND MOBILIZE RESERVISTS IN SUPPORT OF OUR DEFENSE AND NATIONAL SECURITY RESPONSIBILITIES. THE RESERVE FORCE READINESS SYSTEM (RFRS) WILL REPOSITION FULL TIME SUPPORT BILLETS AT THE MISSION EXECUTION LEVEL WHERE THEIR PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY WILL BE TO MAXIMIZE RESERVE READINESS THROUGH PROPER TRAINING, ADMINISTRATION, AND MOBILIZATION OF ALL RESERVISTS. RFRS WILL ALLOW US TO IMPROVE AND CAPITALIZE ON THE READINESS POSTURE THE COAST GUARD RESERVE PROVIDES AS A DEDICATED, TRAINED WORK FORCE WITH A UNIQUE BLEND OF CIVILIAN AND MILITARY SKILL SETS.

4. OUR RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD PRESENTS NEW CHALLENGES FOR OUR SERVICE AND OUR NATION. THE RESERVE FORCE SERVES A CRITICAL ROLE IN OUR ABILITY TO MEET THESE CHALLENGES BY PROVIDING AN ENHANCED SURGE CAPABILITY. THROUGH OUR INFORMED, ACTIVE SUPPORT OF RFRS, WE STAND UNITED IN OUR SERVICES COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE THE BEST ORGANIZATIONAL CONSTRUCT TO SUPPORT OUR RESERVE FORCE.

5. I ENCOURAGE ALL TEAM COAST GUARD MEMBERS TO CONGRATULATE YOUR RESERVE SHIPMATES ON THE OCCASION OF THE RESERVES SIXTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY. TO EACH RESERVIST: I AM PROUD OF YOUR SERVICE, YOUR COMMITMENT AND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS.

6. SEMPER PARATUS.

7. ADM THAD W. ALLEN, COMMANDANT, SENDS.

USCG's Enlisted Petty Officer of the Year Christopher Hutto Gets Ride Aboard Air Force One

Imagine air travel with no waits in long lines and without having to remove items of clothing at a security checkpoint. There's no worry of long term parking fees or sitting next to someone obnoxious. Neither are there mind-numbing checked baggage fees that sink morale faster than a parking ticket during lunch. One lucky Coast Guardsman took such a flight of imagination.

Petty Officer First Class Christopher Hutto, a machinery technician and engineering petty officer stationed aboard Aids-to-Navigation Team Jacksonville, Fla., was awarded a trip aboard Air Force One as a salute to his selection as the 2007 Coast Guard Enlisted Petty Officer of the Year.

"It was beyond words," said Hutto. Hutto and his EPOY colleagues from the other four services accompanied President George W. Bush to New York City to visit the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum on Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

When Hutto arrived at the White House he was notified that President Bush had arranged for all of the EPOYs to be transported via Air Force One from Andrews Air Force Base in nearby Maryland for a flight to New York City.

"President Bush talked with each and everyone of us," Hutto said. In a manner of reflection, the president expressed his gratitude for their service during such a difficult time.

The Blackthorn

At about 8 p.m. Jan. 28, 1980, the 180-foot Coast Guard cutter Blackthorn, approaching the Sunshine Skyway, collided almost head-on with the 605-foot tanker SS Capricorn, which was carrying 152,000 barrels of oil.

The port side of the Capricorn scraped against the Blackthorn's port side, doing minor damage.

But Capricorn's 7-ton anchor snagged the Blackthorn. When the anchor line became taut, the cutter was pulled over, capsizing and sinking within 10 minutes in more than 40 feet of water. Of a crew of 43 people, 23 died, the worst peacetime disaster in Coast Guard history.

The Blackthorn lies some 20 miles off Clearwater Beach, an artificial reef. Each year, the Coast Guard holds a memorial service.

A Radioman's Code

Louis Bakula sat in his room wearing large earphones. He turned the dials on his radio hoping to get a signal from a foreign country. He listened carefully as he received tones and began to jot down a cluster of characters in his notebook.

Bakula isn't a secret agent trying to decipher codes and doesn't have a way to respond to the codes he picks up. At 98 years old, he simply enjoys the fact that after nearly 60 years of being out of the military as a radioman, he still understands Morse code.



SOUTH PARIS, Maine- Louis Bakula, 98, lives at the South Paris veteran's home where his daughter Carole, frequently visits and reminisces about her father being a radioman in the military nearly 60 years ago.

"I knew from the very first time I heard the beeps and tones of the radio, this was the job for me," he said. "Though I don't wear a uniform anymore, I am still a radioman."

Bakula quickly discovered his love for radios when he joined the Naval Reserves in 1930. In 1935, he left the Naval Reserves to join the United States Coast Guard, where he was accepted into the Coast Guard Radio School in New London, Conn.

After he graduated, he reported aboard the Coast Guard Cutter *Algonquin* in Woods Hole, Mass., as a third class petty officer.

"I learned a lot and have some of the finest memories from my first unit," he said. "One of them was when I answered my first SOS signal."

As a young radioman, Bakula recalls being in charge of directing priority information on the ship and having to control all operations.

"I will never forget how nervous I was, but at the same time I was so proud of myself," he said.

After a tour on the *Algonquin*, Bakula served aboard the Coast Guard cutters *Mojave*, *Chelan*, and the *General Greene*, all in Massachusetts.

Aboard the *General Greene*, Bakula took part in his first North Atlantic international ice patrol. Their mission was to chart the movement of icebergs in the North Atlantic.

"This was the '30s, and we didn't have radar," he said. "The ship crept through the fog and we would wait until we could feel the temperature change."

Retirement and Decommissioning Ceremony for CG's Last 44' MLB, 44301

A ceremony will be held to commemorate the 44' MLB retirement. The ceremony will be held on 8 May at Station Chatham, MA. See <http://www.uscg.mil/D1/STACHATHAM/44RETIREMENT.ASP> for information on the 44' MLB or to RSVP for the ceremony.

The 44 ft MLB has been one of the most successful boat designs in Coast Guard history. In service for nearly a half century, Coast Guard 44 ft MLBs and their crews saved thousands of lives and millions of dollars in property. The 44 ft MLB represented the core of heavy weather search and rescue capability to the American boating public for forty six years. Its stalwart presence was always ready for the call when storm driven winds, seas, and surf began to build. With superior structural integrity and seaworthiness, the 44 ft MLB swiftly built a reputation as a boat that safely brought boat crews home in all weather conditions.

Coast Guard members (active duty, retired, reserve, auxiliary, and civilian) are invited to attend this historic occasion. Event details will be posted to Station Chatham's web site and continually updated as the date draws near. Personnel planning to attend are requested to click into the sign in sheet on Station Chatham's web site so that an accurate count is available for planning.

That meant an iceberg was nearby and they would continue slowly until they were close enough to see it. Bakula relayed the iceberg's position over the radio in Morse code to other ships.

During the same patrol, Bakula was standing a radio watch listening for codes. He recalls not hearing a single tone on the radio, when all of a sudden the famed German Airship *Hindenburg* began sending the message "CQ," which means "calling any ship." He responded to the call through Morse code. The airship crew then requested weather conditions and location, which Bakula gave them.

"I believe the *Hindenburg* was somewhere in our vicinity since the shortest route to Europe is over Newfoundland, and then down the coast," he said.

The next day while listening to the radio broadcast codes, Bakula heard a report stating the *Hindenburg* had burst into flames and crashed at the U.S. Naval Air Station in Lakehurst, N.J., while attempting to land.

"I felt a knot instantly in my stomach and realized I had to be one of the last radioman to talk to them," he said.

After serving in the Coast Guard, Bakula transitioned to civilian life and got a job as a sheet metal handler at the Boston Navy Yard. It was there that he met his wife and had three children.

But times were tough.

"I had three small mouths to feed and a wife to take care of," said Bakula. "With the war going on, you didn't know when your next pay check was going to come."

Bakula re-enlisted in the Naval Reserves and resumed his role as a radioman. Soon after, he was ordered to deploy for the Korean War where he served aboard the USS *Rochester* in Japan.



SOUTH PARIS, Maine- Louis Bakula, 98, holds a photo of himself after graduation from radioman school. He left the military nearly 60 years ago, but still understands Morse code.



After almost six months at war, Bakula came home to his family where he finished his enlistment in the Naval Reserves.

Now, half a century later, he lives in the South Paris Maine veteran's home where his daughter, Carole, frequently visits during the week.

SOUTH PARIS, Maine- Louis Bakula, 98, sits in his home at the South Paris veteran's home where he picks up Morse code signals from foreign countries.

Death of an Honored CG Veteran, John "Jack" Campbell

R 291852Z DEC 08 ZUI ASN-A00364000016 ZYB FM COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC//CG-00// TO ALCOAST BT UNCLAS //N05360// ALCOAST 627/08 COMDTNOTE 5360

1. IT IS WITH DEEP REGRET THAT I ANNOUNCE THE PASSING OF A PROMINENT WORLD WAR II COAST GUARD VETERAN, JOHN "JACK" CAMPBELL. MR. CAMPBELL WAS 84 YEARS OF AGE, AND SERVED UNTIL THE END AS A TRUE AMBASSADOR OF THE COAST GUARD.

2. BORN ON FEBRUARY 17, 1924 IN LONG BRANCH NEW JERSEY, MR. CAMPBELL WAS SWORN INTO THE COAST GUARD ON DECEMBER 12, 1942. AFTER BEING DESIGNATED A GUNNERS MATE HE WAS ASSIGNED TO CG FLOTILLA 1 IN POOLE ENGLAND, A PRIMARY STAGING AREA FOR D-DAY OPERATIONS. DURING THE D-DAY INVASION OF NORMANDY, FRANCE ON JUNE 6 1944, MR. CAMPBELL WAS ASSIGNED TO THE 83-FOOT BOAT USCG 49, WHICH OPERATED NEAR THE LANDING AREAS AS A RESCUE CRAFT.

3. AFTER HE LEFT THE COAST GUARD, MR. CAMPBELL EXHIBITED GREAT DEDICATION IN ENSURING THAT THOSE WHO BRAVED ENEMY FIRE TO LAND TROOPS ON HOSTILE FOREIGN SHORES WOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN. BY BRINGING THEIR >HISTORIES TO LIFE HE BROUGHT HONOR TO OUR SERVICE AND THE NATION. HE BECAME A LIFE MEMBER OF THE COAST GUARD COMBAT VETERANS ASSOCIATION AND SERVED AS THEIR NATIONAL PRESIDENT FROM 2001 TO 2002. A FEW OF HIS MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS WITH THE CGCVA INCLUDE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COAST GUARD MEMORIAL IN POOLE ENGLAND, AND BEGINNING THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE RECRUIT TRAINING AWARD FOR PHYSICAL FITNESS. MR. CAMPBELL REGULARLY ATTENDED TRAINING CENTER CAPE MAY GRADUATIONS UNTIL RECENTLY TO PRESENT THAT AWARD, AND INSPIRE THOUSANDS OF OUR NEWEST GUARDIANS. IN RECOGNITION OF HIS CONTRIBUTIONS, HE WAS NAMED AN HONORARY COAST GUARD CHIEF PETTY OFFICER IN DECEMBER 2007. HIS LIFE LONG COMMITMENT TO HIS COUNTRY AND COAST GUARD WAS AN INSPIRATION FOR ALL GUARDIANS. HIS PASSING IS A GREAT LOSS FOR ALL OF US.

ADM THAD W. ALLEN, COMMANDANT, SENDS.

CRDP Progress Report from CO Personnel Service Center (PSC) Topeka

"We have reviewed 64.5% of the over 3800 records potentially eligible for Concurrent Retirement and Disability Payments (CRDP). Of

those reviewed to date, 17.6% are due payments from both the Coast Guard (CG) and Veteran's Administration (VA), 14.3% are due payments just from the VA, and 30.9% are not due additional funds. 1.7% of retirees have been overpaid due to VA changes in disability pay without notification back to the CG.

We transmitted test data cycles to the VA, but still have not received VA approval of final secure transmission protocol procedures. Transmission of payment data to the VA will occur as soon as VA approves. Recipients of VA payments will be provided notification once data has been successfully transmitted to the VA. Recipients of CG payments will receive notification through a Retiree and Annuitant Statement.

We are on pace to review the remaining 1375 records within the next 6 weeks to meet our completion date of 20 Feb 09. We ask for your patience and understanding as we work diligently through a complex and large volume of work while maintaining required services to our retiree and annuitant customers. Thank you!"

J. D. Phillips, P.E, Capt, UsCG

Commanding Officer, Personnel Service Center (Psc) Topeka

Pendleton Hero Bernie Webber dies in Florida



Bernie Webber, the coxswain aboard Coast Guard Rescue 36500 boat that rescued 32 people off the Pendleton tanker in 1952, died Saturday in Florida.

Bernie Webber, who helped rescue 32 people off the coast of Chatham in 1952, died this weekend at his Florida home.

Webber, 80, was one of four Coast Guard crew members who braved storm-ravaged Cape waters on Feb. 18, 1952, after the 503-foot tanker Pendleton broke in two.

Webber and the other Coast Guard members were able to save 32 of 33 people on the tanker, huddling them onto their 36-foot motorized lifeboat. The men had to climb down a ladder rope and jump onto the boat. One man missed and drowned.

The four Coast Guard crew members were hailed as heroes and their boat, the CG36500, has been turned into a floating museum by the Orleans Historical Society.

Kodiak Coast Guardsman Receives New Title of Master Cutterman

Chief Warrant Officer Randy Salenski stationed in Kodiak, Alaska received the Coast Guard's newest honor during an informal ceremony in Kodiak where he was named the services 12th Master Cutterman awarded for more than 20 years at sea.

He has served more than 25 years at sea. In May his sea time will reach 26 years.

The award is a one-time recognition of service signed by the Commandant of the Coast Guard and presented as a framed certificate.

The first Master Cutterman certificate was presented to Chief Warrant Officer Paul Dilger at his retirement on July 27, 2007. Since then there have been 11 certificates awarded making Salenski's the 12th.

Kidde Recalls Fire Extinguishers Due to Failure to Operate

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with the manufacturer announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed.

Name of product: Kidde XL Fire Extinguishers

Units: About 167,000

Distributor: Walter Kidde Portable Equipment Inc., of Mebane, N.C.

Hazard: The pressurized cylinders in the recalled fire extinguishers could lose pressure and fail to operate. In the event of a fire, this failure could put a consumer and property at risk.

Incidents/Injuries: None reported.

Description: This recall involves the Kidde XL Fire Extinguishers with model numbers FX340SC, FX340H, FX340GW, XL5MR, FX210R, FX340SC-2, FX210W, XL2.5TCZ-4, E-340-3 and with manufacture dates between October 2007 and April 2008. "Kidde" and the model number can be found on the label on the front of the extinguisher. The manufacture year is on the bottom of the extinguisher. If your extinguisher is one of the listed model numbers and is marked with the year 07 or 08, contact Kidde to determine if you have a recalled extinguisher.

Sold at: Department, home, and hardware stores nationwide from October 2007 through April 2008 for about \$35.

Remedy: Consumers should immediately inspect the pressure gauge. If it points to the red zone, contact Kidde to receive a free replacement extinguisher. If the gauge is not in the red zone, but you have questions about an extinguisher within the listed model numbers, please contact Kidde for additional information.

Consumer Contact: For additional information, contact Kidde at (888) 345-4407 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday or visit the firm's Web site at www.Kidde.com

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<http://www.uscg.mil/D1/STACHATHAM/44RETIREMENT.ASP> for information on the

44' MLB or to RSVP for the ceremony.



Photo of the Station Chatham Life-boats

The 44 ft MLB has been one of the most successful boat designs in Coast Guard history. In service for nearly a half century, Coast Guard 44 ft MLBs and their crews saved thousands of lives and millions of dollars in property. The 44 ft MLB represented the core of heavy weather search and rescue capability to the American boating public for forty six years. Its stalwart presence was always ready for the call when storm driven winds, seas, and surf began to build. With superior structural integrity and seaworthiness, the 44 ft MLB swiftly built a reputation as a boat that safely brought boat crews home in all weather conditions.

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Reef Shark ,a new 87-foot Coastal Patrol Joined Sector San Juan Fleet

Coast Guard Sector San Juan, accepted a new 87-foot coastal patrol boat, Reef Shark, during a recent commissioning ceremony at Sector San Juan

Rear Adm. Steve Branham, commander of the Coast Guard's Seventh District, presided over the time-honored naval tradition, which marks the formal establishment of the new cutter. Donna M. Christensen, U.S. Virgin Islands delegate to Congress, is the ships "sponsor" and served as the keynote speaker.

LTJG Rachel Cruzcosa, a San Angelo, Texas native, will become the first commanding officer of the Reef Shark. Cruzcosa, a 2006 graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, New London, Conn., will take the helm as one of only four female commanding officers in the 87-foot patrol boat fleet.

The Reef Shark is the final coastal patrol boat to be commissioned and will be responsible for conducting search and rescue, law enforcement, maritime safety, and homeland defense operations throughout the Caribbean Sea.

Mail Must be Addressed to Specific Servicemembers, Military Says

A recent increase in mail addressed to "Any Servicemember" has prompted the Military Postal Service Agency to remind the general public not to send mail or care packages addressed in such a manner.

"Mail to 'Any Servicemember/Any Wounded-Recovering Warrior,' deposited into a collection box and erroneously accepted at a United States Postal Service post office

will not be delivered," MPSA officials said in a news release. "This restriction applies to all classes and types of mail."

The Defense Department suspended the "Any Servicemember" and "Operation Dear Abby" programs in 2001 following the terrorist attacks. The policy was adopted as a way to bolster force protection.

"Even though these programs may provide an excellent means of support to deployed personnel and wounded-recovering warriors, they also provide an avenue to introduce hate mail and hazardous substances or materials into the mail system," MPSA officials said in the release.

The Dear Abby program, founded by the newspaper advice columnist, delivered mail to U.S. servicemembers overseas during the holiday season for 25 years. "Any Servicemember" mail grew out of operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Since shortly after the start of recent operations in the Middle East, many grassroots organizations have made sure servicemembers know they're remembered. Those interested in writing to servicemembers can visit the Defense Department's Community Relations Web site and click the "Citizen Support" link on the right side of the page to find groups that support troops with letters.

Joint All Service Effort Planned to Improve Motorcycle Safety

The Services are pushing for more training after 128 deaths in fiscal 2008. The military's top safety chiefs are taking a unified stance to combat motorcycle mishaps, a major killer of off-duty service members.

Motorcycle use among service members is on the rise, paralleling the nationwide popularity of cruisers and sport bikes, but accident rates have shot up as well. The situation has caught the attention of military safety officials, who are putting new focus on reducing speeding and other high-risk behaviors on the road.

RADM Arthur Johnson who commands the Naval Safety Center in Norfolk, Va. hosted a March 16 meeting in San Diego here of the Joint Services Safety Council, the top safety chiefs from the Navy, Marine Corps, Army, Air Force and Coast Guard. "It's a noticeable change in focus, and that's a direct result of the interaction with all the services," said Johnson.

The council discussed ongoing programs geared to save lives and explored new ideas and approaches, such as expanded rider instruction or popular "track days" that would appeal to military riders. Joining them at the high-level meeting was Tim Buche, president of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, a nonprofit group sponsored by motorcycle manufacturers.

"Speed is the dominating factor in 69 percent of our mishaps," Johnson said. "Speed and loss of control loom very large."

Motorcycle crashes have killed five sailors since Oct. 1, including a petty officer second class who died March 14 in a multivehicle crash in Salerno, Italy. "It appears it was the truck's fault, not the motorcycle's fault," Johnson noted.

But another sailor had just bought his sport bike two hours before he died in a crash, he said. While the investigation remains open, the bike "quite easily could have been beyond his skills set."

The services are seeing good turnouts at track days, events where riders can put their sport bikes through a controlled course while studying cornering, speeds and road conditions.

In a March 16 personal message for senior enlisted leaders, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (SS/SW) Rick West implored all chief petty officers to "reverse the trend of senseless motorcycle deaths" and ensure that new riders complete the Navy's mandatory rider classes.

RADM Mark Tedesco, the Coast Guard's health and safety director, said intrusive leadership "at all levels," including mentorship from other riders, can encourage safer riding and regular use of the proper protective equipment."

"It's at least helped," Tedesco said. "We're all looking hard at that and looking at different ways."

Coast Guard resumed Arctic Domain Awareness Flights

The Coast Guard resumed Arctic Domain Awareness flights beginning March 17 on a schedule of about every two weeks continuing through fall testing capabilities, identifying challenges, surveying sea ice and monitoring vessel traffic in U.S. Arctic waters.

"We must understand the Homeland Security context in the Arctic," said Rear Adm. Gene Brooks, commander of Seventeenth Coast Guard District, "what risks certain vessels pose to the maritime community and infrastructure, the Arctic environment, and Native Alaskan culture and lifestyle."

Last year's observed maritime activity in U.S. Polar regions include:

- (1) Two instances of minimal ice-strengthened industry vessels, with a total of six vessels involved, being beset or nearly beset in late-summer ice west of Barrow.
- 2) Each village had six to 10 small personal vessels, less than 30 feet in length, engaged in subsistence hunting. These vessels travel up to 90 miles out to sea with little or no personal protective equipment.
- (3) Ten to 20 re-supply vessels routinely transit Western Alaska and the U.S. Arctic to provide goods and services to regional villages and Western Canadian Arctic.
- (4) Small pieces of sea ice, roughly the size of a sedan, are often missed by current technology. While inconsequential for icebreakers, this sea ice represents a significant hazard for the remainder of the Coast Guard's surface resource portfolio.

Additional information for the Coast Guard's role in the Arctic can be found at <http://www.piersystem.com/go/page/780/25789/>.

Pterodactyl “Roost” Is On The Horizon! E City, No Carolina October 1-4, 2009

The 2009 Pterodactyl Roost will be hosted by the CG Aviation Logistics Center. The Aviation Technical Training Center, Air Station, Support Center, and several retired local Pterosaurs will also be providing support for this monumental effort. The last ECity roost was in 2003. Roost HQ will be at the Fairfield Inn with several supporting “nests” to accommodate the expected throng. Please see below for the selection of places to hang your helmet bag. Make your reservations early so you don't miss out on your #1 choice. Say “Coast Guard Pterodactyl Roost” to get the roost rate.

Fairfield Inn (252)333-1003; Rooms blocked until August 15, 2009

Hampton Inn (252)333-1800 Rooms blocked until August 1, 2009

Quality Inn (252)338-3951; Rooms blocked until August 1, 2009

Holiday Inn Express (252)338-8900; Rooms blocked until September 1, 2009

Coast Guard MWR (252)335 6482; No cabins, trailers, or camp sites have been blocked. Reservations may be made within in 60 days of your visit. Questions contact - CAPT Steve Goldhammer, USCG RET (301) 570-9613 or It's SEGoldhamm@aol.com.

National Association for Uniformed Services website. <http://www.naus.org>

The National Association for Uniformed Services is a strong lobby in Congress for military legislation. NAUS works at both the national and "grassroots" levels to protect benefits and promote a strong national defense. Membership is open to the entire active duty military/retired/ veteran family — Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, USPHS and NOAA, Guard & Reserve, all grades and ranks.

DoD Changes Identification Cards

The Department of Defense (DoD) began the process of removing Social Security numbers from issued identification (ID) cards in an effort to prevent identity theft. The exception to this applies to Geneva Convention cardholders whose last four numbers of their Social Security number will remain on their cards. All ID card holders should wait until their cards are in need of renewal before replacing their cards with ones devoid of a Social Security number. The DoD instructed **retirees** with indefinite expiration dates on their cards to start replacing them in January 2010. Cardholders whose cards have expired may contact the nearest Real-time Automated Personnel Identification System site. If the cardholder does not know where their local RAPIDS site is located, they can visit the [Rapids Site Locator](#) to find a location nearby.
